

# SESSION 6

# VICTORIOUS FAITH



*When was the last time you had to  
"just grin and bear it"?*

**QUESTION #1**

#BSFLvictorious

*God will strengthen and restore me.*



## THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

“Just grin and bear it.” “Roll with the punches.” “When the going gets tough, the tough get going.” When you’re feeling down and could use some encouragement, clichés are probably the last thing you want to hear.

The worst is when someone decides to merge two sage phrases into one. Something like: “Just bite the bullet and weather the storm.” Is that really the best we can do when someone is hurting?

Many people like clichés and easy answers because they don’t require much effort. But when you’re on the receiving end, such “advice” feels trite. Most of us are grappling with questions that go much deeper: “Will this ever end?” “Is a greater purpose behind what I’m experiencing?” “Where is God in all this?”

In the Book of 1 Peter, the apostle didn’t give us any “easy bake” answers. Instead, Peter offered us a fuller perspective—he showed us a way to deal with our difficulties that goes far beyond “just grin and bear it.”

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## 1 Peter 5:6-11 (HCSB)

- 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at the proper time,
- 7 casting all your care on Him, because He cares about you.
- 8 Be serious! Be alert! Your adversary the Devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour.
- 9 Resist him and be firm in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world.
- 10 Now the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will personally restore, establish, strengthen, and support you after you have suffered a little.
- 11 The dominion belongs to Him forever. Amen.

## Key Word

**Exalt** (v. 6)—Literally means to lift up or to place in prominence. Metaphorically means to esteem or acclaim.



*What's the danger of trying to handle life on your own?*

**QUESTION #2**

## 1 Peter 5:6-7

I tend to get worked up over situations I'm trying to handle myself. I'm a perfectionist, which means:

- ▶ I tend to quit before I even get started because I worry about the end result.
- ▶ I won't ask for help, because nobody does it like I can.
- ▶ I know I won't be able to do it perfectly, so I don't do anything at all.

Those excuses may sound like worry, but they're really a form of pride. When we worry, we are trying to fix things ourselves. We don't trust the sovereign Creator God to deal rightly with our situation. That sounds silly when we think about it. I profess a God who can create the universe, who died on the cross for my sins, and who rose from the dead to redeem me and the whole of His creation—yet I still hesitate to trust Him. If ever a person were worthy of my trust, it certainly is God. Yet, my pride gets in the way.

*What does it mean—and not mean—to humble yourself?*

**QUESTION #3**

Verse 6 calls me to humble myself and allow God to exalt me in the proper time. God is the only One who can rightly raise me up. Why? Because He is perfect in all His ways—even in His dealing with me. If God were not perfect, He would not be worthy of my worship. But He is perfect, and He will rightly deal with all things in His perfect time.

Peter's words in verse 7 give us great encouragement. They remind us we're not insignificant specks in a vast universe. **Remember: the Creator God cares for you right now, wherever you are in life.** God invites you to throw everything on Him and trust the Perfect Caregiver to care for you.

"Be serious! Be alert! Your adversary the Devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour."

— 1 PETER 5:8

## 1 Peter 5:8-9

A friend of mine, Neil, shared with me a personal story of suffering. He and his wife, Anna, lost their baby girl only nine days after she was born. A darkness came on Anna that she described as the deepest abyss she'd ever known. She didn't know how to move on. Neil began to gently remind her of the truths they had studied together about God and the reality of this world. One of those truths was that suffering was not unique to them. People all over the world experience the pain of death.

Eventually, Anna recognized that death, suffering, and pain will come to everyone. She began to have great compassion for those in her church who were suffering from all sorts of evils: child abuse, chronic pain, cancer, and more.

Anna's compassion for the suffering of others helped her to move through her own time of grief. She realized, as Peter wrote, that our suffering is a fellowship that all believers share across the world—it's not exclusive to us individually. Anna also found that, as she suffered, it helped to remind herself of the truths she had already learned. As Peter stated: "Be serious! Be alert!"

You need to have a sound mind that is ready for action. In order to handle the attacks of the Evil One who seeks to devour you, develop self control that focuses on the truths of God. The Evil One is not going to leave you alone because you are vulnerable; in fact, that's when he's most likely to attack! So, put vulnerability at bay by remaining focused and alert.

Peter tells us what to do to resist the Devil: stand firm in the faith. Know what you believe and why you believe it. Continue to learn about God and the truths He has revealed to us, and stand on these truths of the faith. Knowing your beliefs will help you apply them when you need to stand firm against an attack.

***The Devil is your adversary. How can this knowledge affect the way you live?***

**QUESTION #4**

## **1 Peter 5:10-11**

Throughout the Book of 1 Peter, we've been exploring the foundation for real and sure hope that God provides through Jesus—hope for this life and the life to come. Jesus is the example of what awaits us in the resurrection. We will be restored as He was restored. The whole of creation will be made well and whole again because Jesus makes all things new. Something better is coming!

Peter reminds us that, though we may be suffering—and may even suffer to the point of death—we have genuine hope in the reality of an eternal Creator. God is worthy of our trust because of who He is and what He has done. God is the possessor and giver of all grace. He has demonstrated His immeasurable grace by taking on the consequences of evil and death, and defeating it through the resurrection of Christ. This victory and hope is for each of us.

1. God is our foundation for a sure hope.
2. God is the only One worthy of our trust and reverence.
3. God is the reason we can endure suffering and trials with resilient faith.
4. God is victorious.

I'm so thankful for a God who, in His righteousness, provides salvation for humanity. But He added a personal touch as well. Look at the powerful words Peter uses to convey God's love for us: "who called *you* to His eternal glory in Christ Jesus." God will personally restore, establish, strengthen, and support *you!*

God has given me real hope. It's not a delusion. It's not just something I say to make myself feel better. It's a real hope based in the resurrection. It's a hope that I can access and use right now as I endure trials in this life. I can put my trust in Jesus because He is worthy of my trust. My faith is not in vain. There is something better to come. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

***How do we manage the tension of longing for restoration while we suffer in the present?***

**QUESTION #5**



## A PROMISE FOR ALL SEASONS

*Record how God's promise of strength and restoration connects with the different seasons of your life.*

### **PAST**

When has God strengthened and restored you?

Blank yellow area for writing responses to the PAST question.

### **PRESENT**

Where do you need strength and restoration now?

Blank yellow area for writing responses to the PRESENT question.

### **FUTURE**

What do you anticipate most about your future strength and restoration in eternity?

Blank yellow area for writing responses to the FUTURE question.



## LIVE IT OUT

How will you approach God for strength and restoration?

- ▶ **Don't worry.** Be conscious of moments when you experience worry this week. Use these moments as opportunities to express your trust in God.
- ▶ **Be prepared.** Make a plan for dealing with attacks when they come your way. Identify an area of your life in which you feel vulnerable, then focus on a truth from Scripture that will help you stand strong.
- ▶ **Plan a retreat.** Take some time in the near future to get away from your daily routine and spend a significant portion of time with God—and only with God.



When you need help, don't worry about how to “let go and let God” or any other catchy phrase. Simply remember that God is the only sure place to ground your hope, and seek Him for your next step.

## A Parent's Dilemma



**The phone rings. You listen with anguish to the pain in your daughter's voice as she tells of a heartbreaking event in her life. It's all you can do not to rush to her side and do something, anything to ease her pain. As parents, the desire to rescue our offspring never seems to end. When they were little, it was our job to rescue them when they were in trouble. We rushed to soothe their hurts, to make the**

**problem all better. But once they become adults, the line between helping and rescuing is more distinct and more critical.**



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